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Texas Dems Are Raising GOP Blood Pressure as Midterms Approach

While most political watchers see Texas as a reliable and staunch source of Republican support, Texas Democrats are consistently finding ways to give GOP leaders headaches in the days leading up to pivotal midterm elections.

Notably, U.S. Rep. Al Green from the 9th District of Texas (Houston area) was once again removed from the State of the Union address. This time touting a banner which read "BLACK PEOPLE AREN'T APES!"

He was unapologetic for the interruption of decorum during the nationally televised speech.

"The consequences were of no consequence to me," Green told PBS reporters immediately after being removed from the proceedings. "You have to take a stand."

While Green differs from the administration on numerous grounds, the depiction of former President Barack and First Lady Michelle Obama as primates on a public platform was an insult not to be left un-



While U.S. Rep. Al Green (D-TX9) makes headlines confronting the Trump administration overtly, grassroots Democrats are quietly filing in to early voting ballot locations in record numbers across the state. (Youtube / Al Green)

answered.

"I wanted the president to see it, and he saw it, and I told him, Black people are not apes, and for him to do what he did was racist, and he knows it. But sometimes we have to let him know in the public that we know it," Green said to reporters from CNN following the address,

adding "At some point you cannot let racism continue. If you tolerate it, you perpetuate it. I refuse to tolerate racism. The president needs to know that Black people aren't apes, and he should have apologized for what he did."

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People In The News ...



Keanna O'Quinn



Effie Dennison

NDG Quote of the Week:

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."
— Barack Obama

Keanna O'Quinn

(Black PR Wire) MIAMI, FL – Black PR Wire's Thrivin' in Color podcast continues its new season celebrating Black excellence and innovation with its second episode, featuring Keanna O'Quinn, founder and creative director of Sonic Sommelier. In the episode, Keanna shares her journey into music and performance and discusses what inspired her to launch her music curation and sound design firm.



A trained vocalist and seasoned music director, Keanna reflects on the early moments that sparked

her passion for music and performing, and how that path ultimately led her to create a brand of her own. Through Sonic Sommelier, she goes beyond traditional music direction to curate intentional soundscapes that elevate live events and create memorable experiences. "Keanna's journey is a powerful example of what it looks like to lead with purpose and creativity," said Camry Brown, host of Thrivin' in Color. "Through Sonic Sommelier, she is redefining how music is

experienced while creating space for Black women to thrive in luxury and creative leadership."

Sonic Sommelier is a luxury sound design studio founded on the belief that sound is a signature. Operating at the intersection of music, emotion, and experience, Sonic Sommelier curates bespoke sonic environments that shape atmosphere and elevate live moments. Through world-class musicianship and intentional collaboration, the studio works close-

ly with clients to design soundscapes tailored to the mood, energy, and flow of each event, creating experiences that linger long after the final note.

Black PR Wire's Thrivin' in Color podcast celebrates the voices, stories, and experiences of people of color while fostering a sense of community and connection among listeners. Tune in to Thrivin' in Color on YouTube (@BlackPRWire), and all major podcast platforms, including Apple Podcasts and Spotify.

Thrivin' In Color is a podcast produced by Black PR Wire, featuring interviews with remarkable sistas and brothas from across the country who are doing extraordinary things in today's society. Thrivin' In Color takes us behind the scenes of their world, where we meet with them and pick up some golden nuggets for success. Thrivin' In Color podcast is available on YouTube (@BlackPRWire), and all major podcast streaming platforms, including Apple Podcasts and Spotify.

Effie Dennison

Susser Bank has appointed Effie Dennison as Executive Director of Strategic Growth and Corporate Partnerships, a new leadership role supporting the bank's continued growth across Texas and its commitment to the businesses and communities it serves. Dennison is recognized for building high-impact partnerships that expand access to capital and strengthen local economic opportunity.



ative to help us grow intentionally, supporting our clients, strengthening our presence in key markets, and ensuring we remain a trusted partner in the communities where we do business."

Dennison brings more than 25 years of experience in strategic growth and community development, with a track record of helping financial institutions expand their footprint while building strong relationships with civic leaders, nonprofit organizations, and corporate partners. She is known for connecting enterprise strategy, brand, and partnerships in ways that support long-term business objectives and measurable community outcomes.

Prior to joining Susser Bank, Dennison served as

Managing Director and Head of Community Development & Corporate Responsibility at a well-known Texas-based bank, where she led statewide efforts across affordable housing, economic development, community investment, corporate philanthropy, and employee engagement.

"Susser Bank has built a strong culture grounded in local decision-making, accountability, and respect for the markets it serves," said Dennison. "The opportunity ahead is to build on that foundation, working alongside a talented team to support growth that continues to benefit our clients while also advancing the strength, resilience, and prosperity of the communities where the bank operates. I am deeply committed to helping communities thrive and to contributing in meaningful ways across all Susser Bank markets."

Dennison is an active civic leader and currently serves on the boards of The Family Place and Texas Women's Foundation Alumna. She has received multiple honors for her leadership in corporate

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The Resistance Needs Rent Money

By Jasmyne A. Cannick | Our Weekly News

"F— Trump" has become cultural currency. YG made it a hook.

Timelines on fire. Group chats activated. Think pieces flying.

Boycotts declared between brunch reservations. But here's the part nobody wants to talk about:

If you really want to hit back at Trump and his administration, you're going to have to open your wallet. Yes. Your wallet.

The right understands something the left keeps pretending not to: Power requires infrastructure, and infrastructure requires money. MAGA treats funding as a duty, not a debate. That's how movements survive.

While we're busy tweeting clever drags, this administration is busy strangling the very institutions that keep marginalized communities informed, organized, and sane.

The non-profits.

The community radio stations.

The grassroots advocacy groups.

The arts organizations.

The "DEI" programs corporations have suddenly decided are "too political."

The same spaces people claim to love? They're bleeding.

Funding cut.

Corporate sponsors spooked.

Foundations nervous.

Boards scared to be seen as "too aligned."

And a lot of folks who claim to be in the resistance are watching it happen like it's a documentary.

Let's be clear about something.

When Trump and his people attack "DEI," they aren't attacking an HR training slideshow.

They're attacking infrastructure.

They're attacking the pipelines that create leadership.

The community outlets that tell the truth.

The organizations that train young activists.

The legal funds that fight voter suppression.

The local stations that broadcast information when mainstream outlets won't.

They're going after the ecosystem.

And if that ecosystem collapses because we were too comfortable to sustain it? That's not just unfortunate.

That's a win for them.

And before someone says, "Well, I'm not wealthy."

Nobody asked you to be.

This isn't about writing six-figure checks with your name engraved on a plaque. This is about participation.

Five dollars.

Ten dollars.

Twenty-five if you can swing it.

Recurring if you're serious.

The same way people find money for streaming services, concert tickets, sneakers, brunch, and DoorDash convenience

fees — you can find a small, consistent amount to keep the institutions you claim to care about alive.

Movements are not funded by billionaires alone. They're sustained by ordinary people deciding something matters enough to contribute to it.

You don't have to be rich. You just have to be invested.

And if enough regular people decide to show up financially — even modestly — it replaces what corporations pulled back in fear.

Collective power isn't theoretical. It's arithmetic.

You cannot claim you're fighting authoritarianism while letting the last independent platforms standing quietly suffocate.

You cannot say you care about democracy while refusing to financially support the institutions that defend it.

You cannot shout "resistance" and then treat community organizations like optional subscriptions.

Trump doesn't need to shut these places down if we let them starve.

That's the part that should make people uncomfortable.

Because outrage is free.

Infrastructure is not.

If you're furious about corporations backing away from DEI, then replace the funding.

If you're angry about grants disappearing, then become the grant.

If you care about independent Black media, im-

migrant advocacy, LGBTQ youth spaces, women-led nonprofits — then treat them like the essential services they are.

Set up recurring donations.

Sponsor an event.

Buy the membership.

Underwrite the program.

Share the fundraising links.

Actually show up.

Not just when it's trending.

Sustained support is what keeps movements alive. Not hashtags.

And let's be honest — some of these organizations are the last places holding the line. They're preserving culture. Protecting voting rights. Fighting book bans. Providing legal help. Training young leaders. Giving people somewhere to land when the news cycle feels like psychological warfare.

Letting them fold because corporations got scared is not resistance.

It's surrender dressed up as inconvenience.

If Trump and his allies want to weaken communities by choking off resources, and we shrug because it's not personally convenient to give \$25 a month?

That's not sticking it to anyone.

That's letting them win quietly.

You want to fight?

Fund the fight.

Because the loudest statement you can make in this moment isn't another post.

It's keeping the lights on where it matters.

Keep up with the news

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Superagers' Brains Have a 'Resilience Signature,' and It's All About Neuron Growth

By Jenna Kurtzweil

(Newswise) — Brains of older adults with super healthy cognition grow more new neurons than those of their peers, according to a study from UIC, Northwestern University and the University of Washington. Researchers found that the brains of superagers — octogenarians with uncommonly nimble minds — were the most neuronally fertile, while those with Alzheimer's disease had negligible new growth.

"This is a big step forward in understanding how the human brain processes cognition, forms memories and ages. Determining why some brains age more healthily than others can help researchers make therapeutics for healthy aging, cognitive resilience and the prevention of Alzheimer's disease and related dementia," said Orly Lazarov, a professor in UIC's College of Medicine and director of the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia Training Program.

Neurons, or brain cells, support almost every human function. When you wiggle a toe or snap a fin-



DWG Studio

ger, a neuron zaps a signal from your brain to your nervous system. In the latter half of the 20th century, researchers determined that new neurons could spawn throughout the lifespan in the brain's hippocampus, or memory center — a phenomenon called adult neurogenesis.

At first, scientists observed neurogenesis in rodents and were skeptical about whether it would appear in other mammals. Then, studies in primates linked neurogenesis to healthier aging brains, particularly stronger memory formation and processing.

This recent study, published in *Nature*, affirms that neurogenesis occurs in adult humans as well.

The researchers looked

at donated brain samples from five groups: healthy young adults; healthy older adults; older adults with exceptional memory, or superagers; individuals with mild or early dementia; and those diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

The superager brains in the samples came from donors aged 80 years or older with exceptional memory skills. Brain samples from superagers were obtained from Northwestern University. The University of Washington supplied all other samples.

The researchers searched for three stages of developing neurons in the brains' hippocampi: stem cells, which could potentially evolve into neurons; neuroblasts, adolescent stem

cells on their way to neuronhood; and immature neurons, which are just shy of becoming functional.

"Think of the stages of adult neurogenesis like a baby, a toddler and a teenager," Lazarov said. "All are signs that these hippocampi are growing new neurons."

Results indicated that hippocampal neurogenesis, or the formation of new neurons in the hippocampus, does indeed occur in healthy human adults. Further, superagers actively produced more new neurons than their counterparts — their distinct "resilience signature."

"Superagers had twice the neurogenesis of the other healthy older adults," Lazarov said. "Something in their brains enables them to maintain a superior memory. I believe hippocampal neurogenesis is the secret ingredient, and the data support that."

Brain samples from individuals with preclinical cognitive decline — the earliest stage of cognitive decline, before symptoms start to appear — displayed minimal neurogenesis. Those diagnosed with Al-

zheimer's disease generated almost no new neurons.

Further, the researchers observed that the new neurons had different epigenetic signatures — or blueprints for responding to environmental change — depending on the brains' cognitive health.

"Modern medicine has revolutionized health care such that life expectancy is greater now than ever before," said co-lead author Dr. Jalees Rehman, the Benjamin J. Goldberg Professor and head of the department of biochemistry and molecular genetics at UIC. "We need to ensure that this overall increased life expectancy goes along with a high quality of life, including cognitive health."

Rehman said that understanding the full molecular picture of neurogenesis and its epigenetic signature can inform targeted therapeutics to preserve memory and cognitive function in aging adults. Next, this team will examine environmental and lifestyle factors — like diet, exercise and inflammation — that may work alongside neurogenesis to impact aging.

"What's exciting for the

public is that this study shows the aging brain is not fixed or doomed to decline," said Ahmed Dsouky, the first author of the study. "Understanding how some people naturally maintain neurogenesis opens the door to strategies that could help more adults preserve memory and cognitive health as they age."

Additional UIC coauthors include Mark Sanborn, K. R. Sabitha, Mark Maienschein-Cline and Mostafa Mostafa from the College of Medicine.

Brain and tissue samples were obtained from the University of Washington Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, the Adult Changes in Thought study, the Pacific Northwest Brain Donor Network, the Allen Institute for Brain Science, the Northwestern University Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, the SuperAging Research Initiative, the Karen Toffler Charitable Trust and the Gefen-Querrey Brain Health Fund. The study was supported by the National Institute on Aging awards AG033570, AG033570-S2, AG076940, AG079002, AG060238, AG061628 and AG091545.

Pets Can Help Older Adults' Health and Well-Being, but May Strain Budgets Too

(Newswise) — Taking a dog for a walk, cuddling a cat, watching fish glide through a tank, or just having a pet around may help many middle-aged and older adults with their health or well-being, a new poll finds.

But the costs of caring for those pets strains the budgets of 31% of pet owners age 50 and older, the

poll shows. And 33% of people over 50 who don't have pets say such costs are a main reason why.

The findings, from the University of Michigan National Poll on Healthy Aging, give an updated look at an issue that the poll last explored seven years ago in people ages 50 to 80.

The percentage of adults in that age range who have

pets hasn't changed significantly, with 57% having at least one pet today compared with 55% in 2018.

But the percentage of adults aged 50 to 80 who say having a pet gives them a sense of purpose has grown, to 83% today from 73% in 2018.

In addition, 70% of current pet owners over 50 say having a pet connects them

with others, in a time when rates of loneliness and isolation among older adults are high. And 63% say having a pet helps reduce their stress, while 44% say it helps them stay physically active.

Wellness gain, financial strain

But balancing the benefits of pet ownership with the costs has gotten harder.

The percentage of pet owners aged 50 to 80 who say that having a pet strains their budget has risen from 18% in 2018 to 31% today.

The current pet owners who were most likely to report that owning a pet strains their budget included women, those who rated their mental or physical health as fair or poor, individuals with disabili-

ties that limit their daily activity, and those with household incomes under \$60,000.

"Our two polls, seven years apart, clearly show that animals can play a key role in the lives of older adults, and bring many benefits that can contribute to healthy aging," said

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Black Women's Roundtable Gearing Up for 15th Annual Women of Power National Summit

(Black PR Wire) WASHINGTON, D.C. — The National Coalition on Black Civic Participation and the Black Women's Roundtable will convene hundreds of Black women from across the country and around the world for the 15th Annual Black Women's Roundtable (BWR) Women of Power National Summit.

The event will run March 11–15, 2026, in Arlington, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., during Women's History Month.

This year's theme, United We Win: Freedom, Jus-



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tice, Democracy, Safety & Opportunity for All, is a call to collective action and a clear message: Black women remain among the most engaged civic leaders in the nation, building power through collective action, purpose, mutual aid,

and economic mobilization.

The Summit convenes as Black women and Black communities navigate historic challenges: rising unemployment following mass layoffs, the rollback of diversity, equity, and

inclusion (DEI) commitments, and persistent barriers to entrepreneurship and access to capital that threaten workplace stability and long-term economic opportunity. At the same time, renewed attacks on civil rights, voting access, reproductive freedom, and representative democracy seek to weaken the collective power Black women have built over generations.

The BWR Women of Power Summit has been a key strategic convening for 15 years -- meeting the moment by organizing, partnership and build-

ing political and economic power. This year's gathering will also celebrate the ways Black women have shaped the course of the nation — mobilizing voters, building institutions, helping elect the nation's first Black president and first Black South Asian Vice President, supporting the confirmation of the first Black woman to the U.S. Supreme Court, and leading transformative change across nonprofits, labor, business, faith institutions, and movements for justice.

“For fifteen years, the BWR Women of Power

Summit has been where Black women come together not just to talk, but to organize, advocate, and lead in the nation's capitol.

“We gather at a moment when our communities face historic racial & gender discrimination, economic displacement and coordinated political attacks,” said Melanie L. Campbell, President and CEO of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation and Convener of the Black Women's Roundtable.

“But let me be clear: we

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PETS, from Page 4

Preeti Malani, M.D., who directed the poll when the first pet data were gathered in 2018 and now advises its research team. “Yet some of the people who could potentially get the most benefit from having a pet may also be the ones who have cost-related challenges to pet ownership.”

Malani is a Professor in the Department of Internal Medicine at the U-M Medical School with training in geriatrics and infectious diseases, and a longtime dog owner.

The poll is based at the U-M Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation and supported by Michigan Medicine, U-M's academic medical center.

Changes in pet-related measures over time

The 2018 poll included adults aged 50 to 80, while the new poll conducted in September 2025 included people over 80. For the comparisons between the

two poll years, only adults aged 50 to 80 from the 2025 poll were included.

The percentage of the types of pets that older adults have did not change significantly, with 70% of all current pet owners age 50 and over reporting having dogs, 50% having cats, and much smaller percentages having other pets such as fish (6%), birds (4%), small mammals (3%), large mammals (3%) and reptiles (1%). Among current pet owners, 31% said they have more than one kind of pet.

But over time, the poll suggests a decline in how many adults are getting some types of pet-related benefits.

For instance, in 2018, 60% of pet owners said having a pet helped them cope with physical or mental symptoms.

But in 2025, just 34% said this.

The percentage who reported that their pet helped

them be physically active dropped from 64% to 44%, and the percentage who said their pet helped reduce their stress dropped from 79% to 63%.

Among those poll respondents who said they do not have pets, the percentage who cited cost as a reason rose from 21% in 2018 to 33% today.

Another top reason, lack of time to care for a pet, rose from 15% to 20%. And the percentage who said they are not healthy enough to take care of a pet rose from 2% to 6%.

Michigan poll findings

In addition to the national sample, the team also analyzed data from a sample of Michigan adults aged 50 and over, for the Michigan Poll on Healthy Aging supported by the Michigan Health Endowment Fund. In all, 54% of older Michiganders say they have at least one pet.

Among these Michiganders, the five most common benefits of having a

pet were that their pet gives them a sense of purpose (87%), helps them enjoy life (72%), connects them with others (72%), reduces stress (67%), and helps them feel loved (66%).

Michigan pet owners age 50 and older were more likely than pet owners age

50 and older in the rest of the U.S. to agree that having a pet strains their budget (38% in Michigan vs. 31% in the rest of the U.S.).

Cost was commonly mentioned by Michigan adults age 50 and older who don't have pets. In all, 29% of older Michiganders

without pets cited cost as a reason; 42% mentioned not wanting to be tied down and 30% said they just choose not to have a pet.

Explore more findings about Michiganders over 50 and pets on the poll website and through an interactive data dashboard.

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Five Years, 23 Gilman Scholars: PVAMU's Expanding Global Impact

PRAIRIE VIEW – The March 2026 application cycle for the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship is now open as Prairie View A&M University continues to build momentum in global learning and student achievement.

Over the past five years, 23 PVAMU Panthers have received Gilman funding, opening doors to international study and internship opportunities that might otherwise have been financially out of reach.

That legacy continued in the October 2025 cycle, which welcomed a new cohort of Panthers as Gilman Scholars. Among them are Matthew Caldwell, who will study in Iceland; Daniel Roberts, who will study in Japan; and Randi Floyd, who recently completed a dental internship in Zanzibar, each contributing to PVAMU's growing global footprint.

Funded by the U.S. Department of State, the Gilman Scholarship expands access to international



PVAMU Student Amri Williams in Thailand (PVAMU photo)

education for Pell Grant-eligible students, ensuring that financial barriers do not restrict access to transformative global learning opportunities. Through academic coursework, cultural immersion, and professional development abroad, Gilman Scholars gain knowledge and skills that prepare them to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

Reflecting on her recent experience, Gilman Scholar Randi Floyd shared:

“The Gilman Scholarship opened the door for an incredible experience in Zanzibar, one that challenged me, inspired me, and helped shape the future professional I am becoming.”

The impact of Gilman funding spans majors and destinations. Amri Williams, a recipient from the March 2025 cycle, studied at Mahidol University, Thailand, during Fall 2025. Williams noted:

“The Gilman Scholarship

allowed me the opportunity to travel beyond my borders, experience different cultures, and see the world from a broader perspective—without the financial burden that studying abroad can often bring.”

Ezekiel-Peter Fabiyi, a Mechanical Engineering major, completed an international internship in London during Summer 2025. Fabiyi reflected:

“My Gilman experience was transformative, perspective-broadening, and culturally empowering. Interning abroad exposed me to new ways of thinking and solving problems, reshaping how I view engineering and the world around me. It pushed me to grow in independence and adaptability while giving me a real-world experience that strengthened my career direction. Most importantly, it showed me that the global spaces I once thought were out of reach are places where I belong and can succeed.”

Gilman awards provide

up to \$5,000 in base funding, with additional supplemental awards available for Critical Need Language programs (up to \$3,000) and STEM-focused study or internship programs (up to \$1,000). Together, these resources make global experiences more financially attainable for Pell-eligible Panthers.

The Office of International Programs applauds all students who have previously applied and encourages them to apply again. Each application reflects the ambition, resilience, and global vision of PVAMU

students.

The Study Abroad Office remains committed to supporting Panthers through Gilman Writers Workshops and one-on-one advising appointments with Fellowship Advisor Alexis Agard.

Pell-eligible students planning to study or intern abroad this summer or fall are strongly encouraged to apply for the March 2026 cycle. The application deadline is March 5, 2026. Upcoming fellowship and study abroad events are available on the Office of International Programs website.



Ezekiel-Peter Fabiyi in London (PVAMU photo)

TEXAS, from Page 1

Aside from public admonitions by elected officials, Texas Democrats are raising eyebrows at the grassroots level as early voting gets underway in the Lone Star State. According to numerous metrics, Democratic voting in Texas is seeing a surge compared to previous election cycles.

As of Monday evening, more than 581,000 voters had cast ballots in the Democratic primary through in-person early voting or mail, compared with about 521,000 in the Republican primary, the data showed

according to CBS Austin.

That marked a statewide turnout of roughly 6.75% of Texas' 18.7 million registered voters after seven days of early voting, with Democrats accounting for about 53% of the ballots, according to reporting from KXAN in Austin.

This surge reverses trends from past primaries, where Republican early voting often dominated in the reliably red state. This comes after the Trump administration called on Texas officials to redraw district lines specifically to squeeze up to

five more GOP House seats out of Texas moving forward into the second half of Trump's second term. The president has openly stated that if Democrats gain enough seats in the midterms he expects to be impeached again.

Political analysts attributed the Democratic momentum to enthusiasm around the Senate contest, where U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett and state Rep. James Talenco are among the top contenders vying to challenge Republican incumbent Ted Cruz in the general election.

Democratic early voting

is up by more than 211,000 ballots compared with the same point in 2022, according to state data analyzed by public radio station KERA News in Dallas. In that midterm year, overall Democratic primary turnout lagged behind Republicans. This time, the gap has flipped, with Democrats on track to significantly break through their 2022 early voting total of 625,152.

Here in Dallas County, a similar scene played out. Democrats dominated with nearly 78,000 Democrats voting in the first six days — more than three times the number from compa-

rable periods in 2022 and 2024. Republicans tallied about 15,000 ballots, according to FOX4 News.

In neighboring Tarrant County, seen as a Republican stronghold, Democrats cast nearly 56,000 votes, outpacing GOP turnout and marking a sharp increase from prior years.

Even in more conservative areas, turnout was up, though Republicans held advantages.

El Paso County, on the western border, saw Democratic votes rise 51% from the same point in 2022, while Republican ballots increased 35%, *El Paso*

Matters reported. The boost came largely from voters who skipped the 2022 primaries altogether.

In East Texas' Gregg County, more than 5,200 ballots were cast in the first week, roughly double the turnout from the past three primaries, the *Longview News-Journal* said. Daily figures exceeded 1,000 on several days, a rarity in prior cycles.

Lubbock County in West Texas reported 11,577 early votes by Feb. 21, with breakdowns showing steady increases day by day, per the *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*.



Connect2OTT currently manages more than 250 live 24/7 television and radio channels streaming to audiences in more than 190 countries. Civil Rights TV joins this ecosystem as a flagship channel, designed to foster global conversation while demonstrating how media distribution, energy efficiency, and AI readiness can coexist responsibly. (Courtesy photo)

Civil Rights TV Launches in Selma as the World's First 24/7 Civil Rights Network

SELMA, Ala. —Civil Rights TV, the world's first 24-hour television network dedicated exclusively to civil rights history, education, and future equity, has officially launched on the Connect To Your City OTT platform powered by Connect2OTT.



Larry Witherspoon is a technology entrepreneur and founder of Phoenix-based Connect2 Technologies, LLC, including Connect2OTT, Connect2AI, and Connect To Your City OTT Platform. (Courtesy photo)

The network debuts from Selma, Alabama—one of the most historically significant cities in the American civil rights movement—marking a new chapter in how civil rights stories are preserved, amplified, and carried forward for future generations.

Civil Rights TV operates continuously on the Connect To Your City OTT platform powered by Connect2OTT, offering documentaries, news analysis, live discussions, educational programming, global civil rights coverage, and cultural storytelling. The channel functions as both

a historical archive and a living platform addressing contemporary civil rights challenges.

Civil Rights, Technology, and the AI Era

As technology and artificial intelligence increasingly shape access to information, media, and opportunity, Civil Rights TV launches at a moment when access to digital infrastructure itself is emerg-

ing as a civil rights issue.

Media fragmentation, misinformation, and uneven access to technology continue to reshape public discourse. While on-demand platforms have expanded individual content access, large-scale live broadcasting still faces challenges related to congestion, latency, and energy consumption.

Civil Rights TV leverages broadcast-efficient OTT architecture designed to reduce bandwidth usage and energy requirements, enabling continuous global distribution without placing added strain on network infrastructure.

Why Civil Rights TV Matters Now

Civil Rights TV is not only a media launch—it is a signal.

The network underscores the importance of preserv-

See TV, Page 13

GOOD TIMES NEVER SEEMED SO GOOD!

THE NEIL DIAMOND MUSICAL A BEAUTIFUL NOISE



MARCH 10 - 22
MUSIC HALL AT FAIR PARK



First-Ever Dog Days Event at the Dallas Zoo Set for Friday, Feb. 27

The first-ever Dog Days at the Dallas Zoo, a one-day pilot event allowing guests to explore select areas of the Zoo with their canine companions from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This initial Dog Days event is SOLD OUT for our dog friends (tickets for humans are still available) so it will be a full day of dogs at the Dallas Zoo!

For this special event, guests are invited to bring their dogs to the Zoo to walk throughout most of



Dallas Zoo

the Zoo, experience the Zoo environment together, and enjoy a day outdoors alongside their pets. The event is designed to create a safe and enjoyable experience for guests, dogs, and Zoo animals while allowing media to capture unique visuals of dogs exploring the Zoo with their owners.

This inaugural event is structured as a test-and-learn day, with the goal of evaluating future opportunities for dog-friendly experiences at the Zoo. To ensure safety and compliance, additional policies and requirements are in place for this special event – the details are available at

DallasZoo.com/Dog-Days. Dog Days was created in response to growing community interest in pet-friendly experiences and outdoor activities that the WHOLE family (including beloved dogs) can enjoy together. The event offers dog owners a rare opportunity to share one of Dallas's most popular attractions with their pets while spending quality time outdoors. As a pilot program, Dog

Days allows the Zoo to evaluate whether limited dog-friendly events can be offered in the future while ensuring animal welfare, guest safety, and a good experience for other visitors.

The event also reflects the Zoo's commitment to engaging the community in new ways, encouraging responsible pet ownership, and creating memorable experiences that strengthen the connection between people and animals.

As a pilot program, Dog

Days allows the Zoo to evaluate whether limited dog-friendly events can be offered in the future while ensuring animal welfare, guest safety, and a good experience for other visitors.

The event also reflects the Zoo's commitment to engaging the community in new ways, encouraging responsible pet ownership, and creating memorable experiences that strengthen the connection between people and animals.

Girl Tones, an eclectic up-and-coming act, set for two stops in DFW

Girl Tones, of planet Earth, are a high-energy rock duo brought to life by two sisters named Kenzie and Laila. Both classically trained musicians, Kenzie transitioned from cello to guitar and Laila from piano to drums in an effort to electrify sentient beings from this galaxy to the next.

Their debut releases



Youtube

were produced by Brad Shultz of Cage The Elephant and released via his label Parallel Vision in

partnership with Big Loud Rock.

The duo will be performing at Tannahill's Tavern and Music Hall in Fort Worth on March 13, followed by The Echo in Dallas on March 14.

Their first offerings have earned the praise of *Rolling Stone*, *VICE*, *Consequence*, *PAPER*, *NME*, *DORK*, *SPIN* and many

others with Flaunt saying, "Their sound is fluid, and yet with each release, they evolve as a harmonious group, developing their unique sound as one."

In their short but mighty existence, the duo has become synonymous with riotous live shows. Girl Tones has toured with Cage The Elephant across the globe, as well as The

Velveteers, hey, nothing., Silversun Pickups, and Dexter and the Moonrocks in North America. Making their unignorable festival debut at Lollapalooza, Shaky Knees, Austin City Limits and more, Rolling Stone said, "While the White Stripes — their most obvious comparison

See TONES, Page 9

DENNISON, from Page 2

responsibility and community advocacy, including the Dallas Business Journal Minority Business Lead-

er Community Advocate Award and Women Who Mean Business Award.

Susser Bank is a Texas-

based company offering a full suite of personal and commercial banking solutions with offices across Texas – Dallas, Arlington, Austin, Bedford, Cor-

pus Christi, Fort Worth, Garland, Houston, Plano, Round Rock and San Antonio. The company is a diversified bank with robust capital, liquidity, and lead-

ing-edge technology led by the Susser family and a legacy of six generations of Texas entrepreneurs. Susser Bank is dedicated to building long-term client rela-

tionships and providing outstanding financial solutions that make Texas stronger.

More information is available at susserbank.com.

SUMMIT, from Page 5

will not be erased, deterred, distracted, or divided. We are building power — and we are not done."

This year's gathering also takes place during a pivotal midterm election year, as a fragile economy compounds the reality that more than 600,000 Black women have been sidelined in the economy — pushed out of work or locked out of opportunity by structural

barriers, caregiving demands, wage inequities and policy decisions that fail to reflect their lived realities.

Yet even amid these barriers, Black women influence more than \$1.7 trillion in annual consumer spending, representing one of the most powerful economic forces in the United States.

The Summit will explore how that economic influence can be leveraged stra-

tegitally — from entrepreneurship and investment to collective purchasing and mutual aid — to strengthen and protect Black communities nationwide.

Over five days, policy briefings, organizing sessions, and workshops will focus on addressing these challenges and more including: forming support networks to navigate career transitions and health challenges, strengthening community-based solutions,

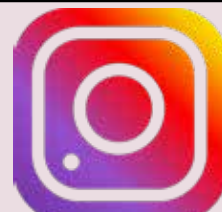
and advancing education, civic engagement, and leadership development as essential tools for resilience and success.

Attendees will also meet with representatives on Capitol Hill.

Grounded in faith and purpose, the Summit will open with a gathering for prayer, centering spiritual resilience alongside political, economic, and community leadership.

The Summit will again

feature a dedicated Black Girls and Girl Power Emerging Leaders Track, investing in the next generation of leaders and ensuring young Black girls have the tools, confidence, and community to rise and lead.



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Film Review: 'My Father's Shadow' Definitely Deserves a Spotlight

By Dwight Brown
NNPA Film Critic

(****) “May the four colors of the earth bless me. I will see you in my dreams.”

Writer/director Akinola Davies has a way with words that's poetic. He has a great feel for sensitive and compelling storytelling, which pervades all that's delicately drawn in this father/son allegory.

Two young brothers, Remi (Chibuikwe Marvelous Egbo) the outspoken one and Aki (Godwin Chiemerie Egbo) the introvert, live in a rural town. They love each other even when they're bickering. The day they reunite with their estranged dad Folarin (Şopé Dirisù, Gangs of London), there is a monumental shift in the father/son relationship. That shift deepens when he takes them to La-



Courtesy Toronto Int'l Film Fest

gos in 1993 and they experience the perils of a very volatile election, military rule and big city dangers. It's a humanizing experience for all. Folarin: “My own father had many wives. Before he died he told me

the only job a man has is to take care of his family.”

And yet, dad has a secret life. At a restaurant he's overly familiar with a waitress — a detail the boys may not notice, but the audience certainly does. The

moment isn't played for scandal. It lingers in glances and body language. This isn't a cue for the audience to judge him, but to see him fully — flawed, contradictory, human. It's in these quiet contradictions that the

writing and direction find their most revealing nuance.

Davies weaves this fable with the help of his cowriter and brother Wale Davies. They establish the bond between the brothers in ways that are universal. Then they pair them with an absentee, philandering and yet loving dad. That's when their script finds its emotional essence and establishes its purpose. Folarin says all the things a dad who hasn't done his job thoroughly would say if he was honest about his feelings. And Remi asks him all the questions a son would ask a father who wasn't there. As forgiveness takes center stage, the narrative captures your heart and doesn't let go. Scenes of the three on a beach are reminiscent of sequences from the Oscar® winning film Moonlight.

They're as beguiling, intimate and evocative.

Gorgeously filmed by cinematographer Jermain Canute Edwards in saturated colors with impeccable attention to composition. Compelling from the quiet moments to scary ones when soldiers dressed in olive green uniforms patrol on a truck and sneer.

The entire cast is appropriately clothed by costume designer PC Williams in western and African garb. Footage is edited by Omar Guzmán with precision. The music by CJ Mirra and Duval Timothy is wondrous.

A thoughtful and profound meditation on fatherhood, political strife and the frailty of life. Touching beyond words.

Visit Film Critic Dwight Brown at DwightBrownInk.com.

Jubilee Theatre to Present Adapted Musical, 'Test to Testimony'

FORT WORTH — Jubilee Theatre proudly announces its upcoming production, Test to Testimony, a powerful gospel musical adaptation inspired by James Weldon Johnson's classic work God's Trombones. This world premiere adaptation is written and directed by Jubilee Theatre's own D. Wambui Richardson, Jubilee's Executive Artistic Director, and will run March 27, 2026 through April 26, 2026.

Rooted in the rich tradition of African American storytelling and the musical legacy of gospel, Test to Testimony transforms Johnson's timeless sermons



into an unforgettable theatrical experience. With soul-stirring music, dynamic performances, and resonant messages of faith and perseverance, the production invites audiences into a sacred space where testimony becomes celebration and spirit

becomes sound.

Originally published in 1927, God's Trombones captures the cadence and power of the Black pulpit through poetic sermons that speak to creation, struggle, redemption, and hope. In Test to Testimony, those be-

loved words are reimagined through gospel music and staged storytelling, honoring the spiritual roots of the work while offering a fresh and immersive experience for today's audiences.

In Richardson's adaptation, the story unfolds within the haunting walls of an asylum, where the spiritual battle becomes deeply personal and urgent. Richardson describes the production as: “A man is stuck in a place where brokenness resides...will he break or will God prevail?” This striking setting heightens the emotional stakes and underscores the central theme of faith enduring in the face of

darkness.

Test to Testimony will feature musical composition and arrangement by Steven A. Taylor, bringing gospel tradition to life through music that amplifies the power of Johnson's sermons and the intensity of Richardson's theatrical vision.

Preview Weekend is March 27–29 for the show that runs through April 26. Opening Night is on April 3 at 6 p.m.

Performance Dates: March 27–April 26, 2026

Tickets are available at jubileetheatre.org or by calling (817) 338-4411.

Test to Testimony continues Jubilee Theatre's mis-

sion to uplift, entertain, and inspire through high-quality productions that reflect the African American experience. This musical celebration of faith and tradition invites audiences of all backgrounds to witness the power of the spoken word and the joy of gospel music brought to life on stage.

Founded in 1981, Jubilee Theatre is dedicated to producing and presenting theatrical works that reflect the African-American experience. Through high-quality performances and educational outreach, Jubilee Theatre fosters community, cultural awareness, and artistic excellence.

TONES, from Page 8

— were about controlled energy, Girl Tones are

proudly imperfect.”

Now in 2026, Girl Tones

are making their way towards the release of their debut album. All the while, they have more tour dates

coming up supporting Peter McPoland and festival appearances at The Great Escape in the UK, and

back in the US at Bonnaroo, Bottlerock, Treefort and Outside Days.

The latest news on Girl

Tones as well as links to their Youtube and social media can be found at www.girltones.com.

Gerrymandered 32nd Has Republicans Chomping at the Bit

By David Wilfong
NDG Contributing Writer

With early voting underway and the March 3 primary approaching fast, the contest for Texas' newly redrawn 32nd Congressional District has emerged as one of the state's most closely watched races, pitting two Democrats in an expected low-turnout primary against a crowded Republican field in what is now expected to be a solidly GOP-leaning seat.

Redistricting by the Republican-led Legislature transformed the 32nd from a compact, Democratic stronghold centered in Dallas into a sprawling district that stretches from northern Dallas County suburbs eastward through Rockwall, Rains, Wood, Camp and Upshur counties and parts of Collin and Hunt counties. The new map, which added conservative rural territory, flipped the district's partisan balance.

Some analysts rate it as safely Republican, one of several targets in the GOP's congressional gerrymander. No incumbent is running. Rep. Julie Johnson (D-Farmers Branch), who held District 32 under its old boundaries, is now seeking election in the neighboring 33rd District after the map changes where she faces Colin Allred, also a veteran congressman.

On the Democratic side this time, the primary features a matchup between two North Texas Democrats with contrasting backgrounds.

Dan Barrios, a Richardson City Council member elected in 2023, is a former teacher and longtime



community volunteer who grew up in Brownsville and has lived in North Texas for more than 25 years. He frames his campaign around practical, local governance: lowering costs for groceries and housing through stronger consumer protections, expanding health care access amid rising premiums and restoring public trust by rejecting political extremism.

"I've seen what good government can deliver when it works for everyone, not just the few," Barrios said in campaign materials.

His effort is grassroots-funded and emphasizes service over ideology.

Anthony Bridges, an Army veteran who served six years on active duty, works as an EMT and first responder and describes himself as a human rights activist and "one angry Texan." He is sharply critical of both parties' leadership, accusing Democrats of offering only "strongly worded letters and word salads on TV" while vowing to accept no donations from billionaires, corporations or super PACs.

Bridges says he entered the race to fight for single payer health care, against the rising cost of living and

what he calls pointless foreign wars that benefit defense contractors.

"Donald Trump and Chuck Schumer are going to hate me as much as we hate them and their billionaire buddies," he said on his campaign site, adding "Let's make them cry together."

Neither Democrat has raised a large amount of funds for the race, and the winner will enter the general election as a heavy underdog against whoever the Republican nominee turns out to be.

The Republican primary is quite crowded, with nine candidates on the ballot in a contest that is likely to force a May 26 runoff.

Attention has centered on three frontrunners who lead in fundraising, endorsements and media coverage: Jace Yarbrough, Ryan Binkley and Darrell Day.

Jace Yarbrough, a seventh-generation Texan, Air Force veteran and constitutional attorney, has secured former President Donald Trump's endorsement and is running an "America First" campaign. A Stanford Law School graduate and former Federalist Society chapter president, Yarbrough has litigated against vaccine mandates, DEI ini-

tiatives and what he calls religious discrimination.

He founded a classical Christian academy in Denton; they have five children. Yarbrough says he is running to deliver reinforcements for Trump's agenda and block "the radical left from taking us backwards." His platform stresses election integrity, parental rights, border security and traditional values.

Ryan Binkley, CEO and co-founder of the Generational Group business brokerage and senior pastor of Create Church in Richardson, brings deep roots in the district and a large personal financial commitment. He self-funded a long-shot 2024 presidential bid and has poured substantial resources into this race, raising more than a million dollars so far.

Binkley, who has lived and worked in northern Dallas County for 35 years, emphasizes job creation, faith-based leadership and

family values. His platform calls for securing the border, expanding domestic energy production, cutting federal spending and taxes, protecting girls' sports from transgender athletes and ensuring election integrity. Binkley has proposed a seven-year plan to reduce the national debt, mandate health care price transparency and expand health savings accounts.

Darrell Day, a former Arlington City Council member and the Republican nominee in the old 32nd District in 2024, positions himself as the candidate with proven local elected experience and unwavering MAGA credentials.

A lifelong Texas business owner and former GOP precinct chair, Day stresses border security to stop illegal immigration, drugs and human trafficking; lower taxes and reduced regulation; pro-life policies; traditional family values; and strong Second Amendment

protections."I stand on the unshakable foundation of the Bible and the U.S. Constitution to deliver solid solutions for Texans," Day says on his campaign site..

Other Republican candidates include Paul Bondar, who ran for Oklahoma's 4th District in 2024; Gordon Heslop, who has gained some support from moderates for his "Make America Normal Again" message; oil-and-gas worker James Ussery; Gordon Heslop, Monty Montanez, Abteen Vaziri and Aimee Carrasco.

Democrats have tried to highlight health care costs and threats to democratic norms, but the redrawn district's conservative tilt has definitely given Dems an uphill battle regardless of who wins the primary.

An independent candidate, Charles Harper, has also filed for the general election. He is a Navy veteran, a former construction worker and a mental health advocate.

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Two Popular Dems Square Off Over Redrawn U.S. House District 33

By David Wilfong
NDG Contributing Writer

In one of the most unusual congressional primaries in Texas, former U.S. Rep. Colin Allred and incumbent District 32 Rep. Julie Johnson are locked in a high-stakes Democratic contest for the newly redrawn 33rd Congressional District.

This seat in Dallas County, seen by poll watchers as solid blue, is one of the more interesting that emerged from Republican-led redistricting in the North Texas area. Early voting began last week for the March 3 primary, where Allred and Johnson headline a four-candidate Democratic field.

The winner is highly expected to prevail in November against a Republican nominee from a crowded but low-profile GOP primary.

Republicans, who control the Legislature, eliminated one of three Democratic-held seats in the Dallas-Fort Worth metro area. The old 32nd District, which Johnson won in 2024 after Allred ran for Senate, was stretched eastward into heavy Republican territory. The old 33rd, long represented by Rep. Marc Veasey, lost its Fort Worth anchor and was redrawn entirely within Dallas County.

Veasey, first elected in 2012, announced in December 2025 he would not seek re-election to Congress. The new 33rd is rated D+18 by the Cook Partisan Voting Index, which gives an advantage to former House Representative Allred in the current contest. It has a majority-



Map: Wikipedia

Latino eligible voter population and stretches from Grand Prairie through downtown Dallas to parts of Oak Cliff and the Reinhardt neighborhood.

Johnson, the first openly LGBTQ member of Congress from Texas, filed for the seat on the Friday before the Dec. 8, 2025, deadline.

Allred, who represented an earlier version of the 32nd from 2019 to 2025, dropped out of the Senate race that same Monday and filed for the 33rd hours later. The overlap, representing roughly one-third of the new district's residents coming from the old 32nd, has turned the contest into a rare predecessor-versus-successor matchup.

Allred is a former NFL linebacker, civil rights attorney and Obama-era Housing and Urban Development official. He has emphasized his record of delivering \$135 million in federal funding for transportation, health care, housing and law enforcement while in Congress. He touts a bipartisan reputation and says he never accepted corporate PAC money or traded stocks.

"I felt a responsibility to

those folks to try and make sure that we have a unified party going into November, and that I could best serve by looking at serving my hometown," he told reporters after switching races.

Johnson counters that she has been the consistent voice on the ground.

"This new district deserves representation that has been present in the tough moments, including throughout the redistricting fight, instead of parachuting back when another campaign doesn't work out," she said.

She has highlighted her work in the Texas House from 2019 to 2025, where she authored legislation to expand Medicaid, and her congressional focus on abortion rights, gun safety and lowering prescription drug prices.

The campaign has grown testy. Johnson has accused Allred of taking "a Republican turn" during his Senate run, citing his vote for the Laken Riley Act, which she says allows mass deportations without due process.

Allred has criticized Johnson over stock trades, adding that she held shares in Palantir Technologies (a

contractor involved in immigration enforcement) and was among the most active traders in Congress. Johnson defends the trades, saying they were managed by independent advisers, that she has divested all actively traded stocks, and would support a congressional stock-trading ban.

The race has exposed tensions within North Texas Democrats after redistricting forced a game of politically-musical chairs while voters in the district grapple with issues familiar to urban Texas: rising housing costs, public school funding, access to

health care and the effects of federal immigration enforcement under a second Trump administration.

Both leading Democrats have promised to protect reproductive rights, expand health coverage and invest in infrastructure, but they differ in tone on confronting the administration. Allred stresses his willingness to "stand up" even in a tough district; Johnson points to her votes against Republican-led measures on immigration and non-profit investigations.

Two lesser-known Democrats round out the field. Zeeshan Hafeez, an at-

torney and tech executive and son of immigrants, is running a progressive campaign calling to abolish ICE, label the situation in Gaza a genocide and reject corporate PAC money.

"A lot of Democratic primary voters that we're talking to are frustrated with the status quo," he said in a recent interview. "I think they've seen that the establishment Democrats have let us down. The country is going and creeping towards an authoritarian takeover by Donald Trump. We see ICE, and there are gross

See DIST33, Page 16



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**McKinney Housing Authority
2026 ANNUAL PLAN
PUBLIC MEETINGS NOTICE**

The Quality Housing & Work Responsibility Act of 1998 requires the McKinney Housing Authority to submit an Agency Plan each year.

The PHA Plan is a comprehensive guide to public housing agency (PHA) policies, programs, operations, and strategies for meeting local housing needs and goals. There are two parts to the PHA Plan: the 5-Year Plan, which each PHA submits to HUD once every 5th PHA fiscal year, and the Annual Plan, which is submitted to HUD every year.

Below is a list of meetings that are scheduled to review and discuss the Agency Plan documents for the 2026 fiscal year. Program participants, the public and staff are encouraged to attend the meetings.

**Autoridad de Vivienda McKinney
PLAN ANUAL 2026
REUNIONES DARSE CUENTA**

La Ley de Vivienda y Responsabilidad Laboral de Calidad de 1998 requiere que la Autoridad de Vivienda de McKinney presente un Plan de la Agencia cada año.

El Plan PHA es una guía completa de las políticas, programas, operaciones y estrategias de las agencias de vivienda pública (PHA) para satisfacer las necesidades y los objetivos de vivienda locales. Hay dos partes en el Plan PHA: el Plan de 5 años, que cada PHA presenta a HUD una vez cada quinto año fiscal de PHA, y el Plan anual, que se envía a HUD cada año.

A continuación hay una lista de reuniones que están programadas para revisar y analizar los documentos del Plan de la Agencia para el año fiscal 2026.

Tuesday January 27, 2026	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Newsome Homes Community Center	1450 Amcott St. McKinney, TX 75069
Tuesday February 24, 2026	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Merritt Homes Community Center	1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069
Tuesday March 31, 2026	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Newsome Homes Community Center	1450 Amcott St. McKinney, TX 75069

A draft of the proposed ANNUAL Plan is available for review at the MHA main office located at: 603 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX.

Comments can be submitted by hand delivery, mail, or email to McKinney Housing Authority. Main Office; 603 North Tennessee Street; Attn: Roslyn Miller; McKinney, TX 75069 or info@mckinneyha.org. The final public hearing for plan adoption will be held on Tuesday, March 31st at 4:30pm – Newsome Homes community center.

Want Entrepreneurs to Work Harder? Tell Them They'll Fail

By Matt Shipman

(Newswise) — A new study finds entrepreneurs become more committed to their business ventures when they are told they will fail, increasing their efforts to make those businesses successful.

“Most entrepreneurs — people who start their own businesses — actually identify with the business they’re running,” says Tim Michaelis, corresponding author of a paper on the work and an assistant professor of psychology at North Carolina State University. “So being told that your business, your idea that you are committed to, will be a failure can almost seem like a personal attack.

“We wanted to see if being told that their business will fail actually gets entrepreneurs to commit even more deeply,” Michaelis says. “We were somewhat surprised that researchers had not already examined this. Most of the literature in this area is from the field of developmental psychology and hadn’t explored potential business implications. Fundamentally, we wanted to know if having an underdog mentality can

motivate entrepreneurs.”

To explore the subject, the researchers conducted three studies.

For the first study, the researchers recruited 423 entrepreneurs; of those, 213 were in a control group that was not asked about a time they had been told they would fail. One hundred and seven participants were asked about, but could not recall, a time they were told they would fail. The remaining 103 participants did recall a time they were told they would fail. The researchers then asked all study participants questions designed to capture how committed they were to persisting with their new businesses.

“We found that entrepreneurs who could recall being told their business would fail displayed a deeper commitment to persisting with their business ventures,” Michaelis says.

For the second study, the researchers worked with 579 entrepreneurs. In this study, the control group consisted of 289 participants; 234 participants couldn’t remember being told they would fail; and 56 could recall a time they were told they would fail.

This time the researchers essentially replicated the first study, but rather than asking questions designed to measure persistence, they asked questions designed to measure the extent to which study participants were motivated to prove someone wrong. The 56 participants who could recall being told they would fail were asked about their motivation to prove that specific naysayer wrong — the so-called “underdog effect.” The remaining study participants were simply asked about their motivation to prove something to general stakeholders.

“The results here were consistent with the first study — recalling a time when someone told them they would fail led to increased motivation to persist with their business venture,” says Michaelis.

For study three, the researchers recruited 417 entrepreneurs. The study

participants were surveyed once per month for three months. The first month’s survey served to establish a baseline, measuring the extent to which each study participant was motivated to persist with their venture by the underdog effect — a desire to prove any doubters wrong.

The second and third surveys varied slightly, but were essentially designed to assess the extent to which motivation and persistence were driven by the underdog effect. The surveys also accounted for other variables associated with motivation and persistence, such as confidence, past experience, financial benefit and passion for the work.

“The third study reinforced what we found in studies one and two — the underdog effect is a powerful motivator that increases an entrepreneur’s motivation and persistence regard-

ing their venture,” says Michaelis. “In other words, the underdog effect leads to people working harder, focusing on their venture, and really committing to the success of their business.”

But the studies also revealed something unexpected.

“There were a surprisingly large number of study participants who had never been told that they would fail — they had only ever received positive feedback, or possibly no feedback, about their business ideas,” says Michaelis. “And we found that those study participants were less committed to their business ideas

and had lower levels of persistence.

“This work offers real insight into what motivates entrepreneurs, and it raises some interesting questions,” says Michaelis.

“How do you give entrepreneurs enough support to encourage their initiative, but enough resistance to help them develop the drive they need to succeed? How can we train entrepreneurs to distinguish between doubts that can serve as motivational fuel and constructive criticism that highlights real flaws in a business plan? These are issues we can explore moving forward.”

TV, from Page 7

ing civil rights history using the most accurate and comprehensive sources available. For generations, the Black press has maintained some of the deepest and most reliable documentation of the civil rights movement, currents events, news and critical Black history, much of which remains underrepresented in modern digital media archives and inaccessible to

artificial intelligence (AI) systems.

As a result, Civil Rights TV will rely heavily on national Black press for news, historical archives and independent voices. Prominent digital news platforms, podcasts, and broadcasters—will play an instrumental role in shaping continuous coverage, historical interpretation, and public discourse.



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Nobody Is Perfect, At Least That's What I'm Told

By Dr. James L. Snyder

People often say nobody is perfect. I've said that at least 100 times, but there are times when I am not quite sure that it applies to me.

There are some situations when I think I am perfect. I do not say it aloud because I do not want to step on anybody's toes. But I believe I am perfect, I keep believing it, and then reality hits like a pie in my face.

When I think I am perfect, I reach a stage so imperfect that I am ashamed. I work hard at trying to be perfect. My goal I have in life is to do things perfectly. Up until now, I have not reached my goal, but I've come close.

I like to be around people who think they are perfect. It is easy to trip them up in what they believe about themselves.

To be truthful, the only person I know who is perfect is The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. I have known her for over 55 years, and if she is not perfect, she has put up a good face for all those years.

She knows how to fix anything and everything.

I will never forget when the front bumper of my truck broke. I was going to take it to the garage to have them fix it, but as I was looking at the bumper, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage came out of the

house and said, "What's the problem with your truck?"

Really, I didn't want to tell her, but what's a husband to do? I looked at her and said, "The front bumper of my truck is broken and I'm going to have to take it into the garage to get fixed."

"No," she said, "let me look at it before you take it to the garage. Maybe it's something I can fix."

I chuckled because that was a big job to fix.

She looked at it for a moment and then said, "Okay, I see what's wrong and I think I can fix this. Let me go to my craft room and get something I think might work."

She went into the house and, within a few moments, came out with several of those large paperclips. She went over to the bumper and began working on it, and within a few moments, she said, "Okay, I think I fixed the bumper, you don't have to spend any of your money taking it to the garage."

Looking at me with one of her smiles, she said, "You're welcome." Then she walked back into the house.

I didn't quite get what she said, but I looked, and there were a bunch of those large paperclips holding the bumper to the truck. To this day, I do not know how she came up with that idea.

That was about five years

ago, and those paperclips are still holding my bumper to the truck. Who would have guessed?

She does have a flair for fixing anything and everything. If you could see in her craft room, you would see what I'm talking about. If it is broken, she can fix it. If she can't fix it, it's not broken.

With that in mind, I have concluded, after all these years, that she is as close to being perfect as anyone I know.

The only difference is that she likes broccoli and I hate broccoli, and I like Apple Fritters, and she hates Apple Fritters. All those years, this has been the only problem we have.

Occasionally, she will cook broccoli for supper, but makes sure it does not come anywhere near my plate. I know when she's cooking broccoli because I can smell it, and I do not like that smell.

The other night at suppertime, she brought me my supper plate, then went out and got one for herself, and came back. We sat in the room and enjoyed our supper together while watching TV.

I saw something on my plate that puzzled me. It was something green. I did not pay too much attention because the rest of the plate was very delicious. However, I could not help but look at that little green

thing. It looked like a leaf of some sort, but it was so small.

As I looked at it, sighed very deeply and said to myself, "Oh, no, it is not that!"

I looked at it, picked it up with my fork, and it was exactly what I thought it was. I called the attention of The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, showed it to her, and said, "Can you explain this for me?"

She gasped for a mo-

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Black History - Robert R. Taylor



Sister Tarpley
NDG
Religion
Editor

At the Annual African America Read-In event at the Josey Ranch Library on February 19, 2017 by the PACE organization, young Terrell M. Bennett (age 7) amazed and inspired the audience with his reading and musical ability.

I thought it would be an honor for Dr. Terrell and Sister Jeannette Bennett (his parents) to feature Mr. Robert R. Taylor at the end of Black History Month 2017.

Young Terrell has been reading since the age of four and his ability to play the drums since the age of three, both taught to him by his father Dr. Terrell Bennett.

Young Terrell selected the biography of Robert R. Taylor to read because he

was the first Black man to graduate from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and he paved the way for other Black people to attend, including his father and his mother, Jeannette Bennett.

Robert R. Taylor, a Black architect, was born in 1868 in Wilmington, NC, he came from a middle-class family. His father, Henry, was the son of a white slave owner and a Black mother.

The elder Taylor had

been allowed to go into business for himself before the Civil War, building cargo ships for trade routes between the United States and South America through the Caribbean.

He also built many commercial and residential edifices. Young Taylor's early schooling took place at the Williston School and the Gregory Institute, a school for Blacks operated and maintained by the American Missionary Association.

After graduating, he worked in his father's building trade business with his sights on Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

He was admitted to the regular freshman class on September 23, 1888, although a couple of years older than the average freshman because of his work with his father.

Taylor was one of a handful of students from the South. Even the southern whites encountered

prejudice but Blacks even more so.

Few Blacks were part of the MIT community in its early years, even though founder, William Barton Rogers, had shown a keen interest in issues relating to race.

Taylor's record at MIT during the four years he attended, 1888-1892, was above the class average; he earned honors in trigonometry, architectural his-

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ment, looked at the little green thing on my fork, and sighed very deeply, "Oh, no, it isn't." She looked at it a little more and said, "I'm so sorry, it is a piece of broccoli."

I could not believe it, but as I looked at it, I had to agree with her. This is the one time that I can remember when she was not perfect.

Thinking along this line,

I remembered a Bible verse about this. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

I cannot be perfect from the human standpoint, but I can achieve perfection in the spiritual realm. The pat-

tern of my perfection is not anything in this world, but according to God's aspiration for me.

Dr. James L. Snyder lives in Ocala, FL with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone

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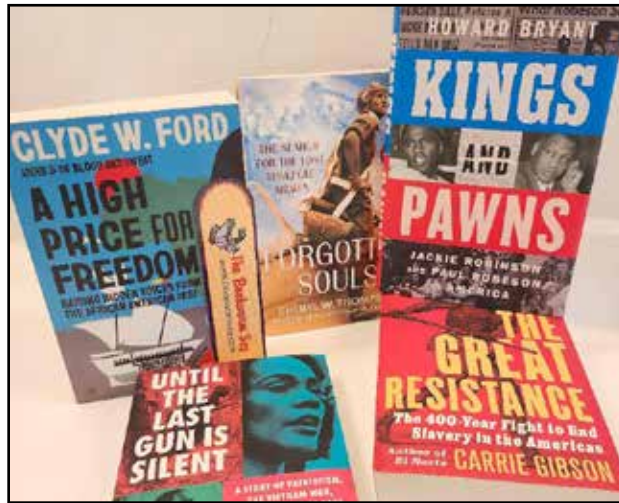
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NDG Bookshelf: Black History books by Various Authors to Fill Out February

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

For weeks now, you've been remembering, studying various subjects, and celebrating Black History Month. But just a reminder: every day is a good day to learn about Black History. These great books can help...

About a year or so ago, we marked the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War and we remembered the men and women who served. Now step further: in **"Until the Last Gun is Silent: A Story of Patriotism, the Vietnam War, and the Fight to Save America's Soul"** by **Matthew F. Delmont** (Viking, \$32), you'll read about Black soldiers,



Terri Schlichenmeyer

activists, and protesters who helped bring the war to its end. This book isn't just about war and peace, though; it's also about justice, racism, rights, and it's great for anyone too young to remember.

Another book about

battlefields – in this case, airfields – is **"Forgotten Souls: The Search for the Lost Tuskegee Airmen"** by **Charyl W. Thompson** (Dafina Books, \$30). This small book packs twenty-seven tales of airmen who vanished while fighting

America's enemies, and the injustices their families endured after they were lost. Written by the daughter of a Tuskegee airman, this is a must-read if you want a book that'll thrill you and sadden you, both. Perfect for young readers, this is also one you'll want to share with an elder.

For readers who want to reach back much more in their Black History quest, look for **"A High Price for Freedom: Raising Hidden Voices from the African American Past"** by **Clyde W. Ford** (Amistad, \$30). It's one of those little-known-history books that are intriguing, thought-provoking, enjoyable, and hard to put down. Also look for **"The Great Resistance:**

The 400-Year Fight to End Slavery in the Americas" by **Carrie Gibson** (Grove Atlantic, \$35). This is a huge book but don't let its size scare you. Its comprehensiveness makes the time it'll take to read it, worth it.

When thinking about Black History, the Cold War era might not come to mind, but **"Kings and Pawns: Jackie Robinson and Paul Robeson in America"** by **Howard Bryant** (Mariner, \$32) takes readers to those years. It's the story of two men, one who'd just integrated America's favorite ball game, and how his testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee affected the other man, who was one of the country's leading

Black American athletes and performers. But this book doesn't stop there: it follows both Robeson and Robinson as an equally tumultuous event happened, years later – the aftermath of both that, says the author, still resonate today.

So you say you still need more? You want a book about African American women, or a book on reparations, or one for kids or teens or more on the subjects above. Then now's the time to head to your favorite bookstore or library and ask for help finding what fits your interests best. The staff there can help you get the exact book you're seeking, and more because any day is a good day to read about Black History.

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tory, differential calculus, and applied mechanics. he never failed a course.

He was twice recommended for the Loring Scholarship, which he held for two consecutive academic years.

Taylor was the first Black person to receive an architecture degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

After graduation, he

married Nellie C. Taylor and worked as an architect and educator at Tuskegee Institute nearly until the end of his career.

Taylor designed most buildings at Tuskegee built before 1932, including the original Chapel and the library, between the years 1899-1902.

For a short period, he was employed by a Cleveland architectural firm.

Some believe he had disagreements at Tuskegee with the dictatorial style of Booker T. Washington.

Though he could have been better employed elsewhere, he retired from Tuskegee in 1935.

Throughout his life, Taylor retained a deep respect for MIT. In 1942, he wrote to the secretary of his MIT class indicating that he had just been released from treatment for an unspecified illness at the Mayo

Clinic in Rochester, MN.

"Thanks to a kind Providence and skillful physicians," he said, "I am much better now." Taylor lived his life as one of faith to his race.

Taylor collapsed and died on December 13, 1942 while attending services in the Tuskegee chapel that he had designed and considered his outstanding achievement as an architect.

(Editor's Note: This col-

umn originally ran in February 2016. Sister Tarpley passed away in May 2024.

We keep her words alive in our print edition every week.)

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injustices that are happening where they're literally murdering people on the streets."

Carlos Quintanilla is a community activist who has run for the seat before. He criticizes both front-runners on immigration and stock issues and says he takes no PAC money.

Hafeez and Quintanilla, both polling in single dig-

its, hope to capitalize on dissatisfaction with the establishment. Hafeez has positioned himself as the only candidate willing to call for abolishing ICE and addressing Palestine directly. Quintanilla leans on decades of local activism on issues from heroin addiction to education.

On the Republican side, four candidates are com-

peting for a nomination that some say offers little realistic path to victory. Patrick Gillespie, Monte Mitchell, Kurt L Schwab and John Sims are on the ballot.

Republicans acknowledge the district's leanings, with the general election rated "Solid Democratic" by most political watchers. The Democratic nominee will enter November as a heavy favorite in a district

where Democrats have won by double digits for years.

With primary day approaching fast, the contest has drawn national attention as a test of Democratic unity in a state where the party lost ground in 2024. Turnout is expected to be modest, typical for a non-presidential primary, but the winner will carry the burden of uniting the party quickly for November.

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